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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this guide is to inform parents, advocates, and school personnel about existing laws and resources available to ensure that every child and every school employee has an environmentally safe and healthy school that is clean and in good repair. An environmentally safe and healthy school is one of the principles adopted by the New York State Board of Regents; others are that schools should be role models of environmentally responsible behavior and that public officials should be held accountable for school conditions. The guide identifies typical hazards, explains why the hazards are important, and describes how and where to look for them. It also points toward laws that the school might be violating by allowing problems to go uncorrected. The rights identified for users of New York schools are: (1) clean indoor air; (2) an asbestos-safe school; (3) a lead-safe school; (4) an appropriate and uncrowded classroom; (5) safe heat and ventilation; (6) freedom from fire hazards; (7) crack-free walls and ceilings; (8) a safe playground; (9) usable and sanitary bathrooms; (10) a pest-free school; (11) a pesticide-free school; and (12) information about the school building. Appendixes contain sample complaint letters, further affirmative steps, and congressional contact information. (SLD)

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New York City Healthy Schools Working Group

Environmental Action Guide for New York City Schools

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PREFACE

Families and communities are working hard to protect the next generation from the threats of violence and addictions. Yet, other threats such as childhood asthma, learning disabilities, behavior problems, and some cancers are increasing rapidly despite parents' best efforts and advances in medicine. New research demonstrates that young children are uniquely vulnerable to environmental health hazards, and some health and learning problems are linked to pollutants. This means we must protect our children against environmental hazards in homes, schools, and communities that can threaten or impair their long-term health and ability to learn. Indeed, our success as a society will be judged on the relative health, independence, and success of the next generation.

The purpose of this GUIDE is to inform parents, advocates, and school personnel about existing laws and resources available to ensure that every child and every school employee has an environmentally safe and healthy school. There are several Principles of School Environmental Quality adopted by the New York State Board of Regents in December 1994: that every child and school employee has a right to an environmentally safe and healthy school which is clean and in good repair; that schools are role models of environmentally responsible behavior; and that public officials are held accountable for school conditions. We hope this guide can help assure that each of these principles is met for every school in New York.

The Guide is a joint project of Healthy Schools Network, Inc. (HSN) and Advocates for Children of New York, Inc. (AFC). We gratefully acknowledge the New York Foundation whose generous support has enabled this project. We would like to thank all the members of the New York City Healthy Schools Working Group who contributed their expertise and editing skills.

INTRODUCTION

As our children go off to school, we hope they will learn, play, and have good experiences with other students and their teachers. But we also worry-- about gangs, violence, and drugs or alcohol. We rarely hear or think about the environmental threats that face our children and their teachers in school every day: walls covered with peeling lead-based paint or mold; stopped up sinks and over-flowing toilets; indoor air contaminated with asbestos, dust, or chemical fumes from cleaning agents or construction materials; hazardous art, sciences, and vocational education supplies; pest infestations temporarily checked with toxic pesticide applications to buildings and grounds; playgrounds that invite children to swing, climb and slide, but with lead and pesticide contaminated dirt and no cushioned surfaces for the youngest learners. In addition to exposure to construction hazards and noise during the regular school year, children in school during the summer may have a magnified exposure risk to environmental hazards since schools schedule heavy cleaning and renovations for the summer.

NEWS ABOUT CHILDREN'S ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

Children are particularly at risk from many environmental threats. Ultimately, they are exposed to more hazards because their body organs and systems are still developing, they eat proportionally more food, drink more fluids, and breathe more air per pound of body weight than adults, and they are least able to protect themselves. This is why we all must work to keep our children safe from the environmental threats we are able to control or avoid.

INFORMATION ABOUT SCHOOL ENVIRONMENTS

Nationally, the US Government Accounting Office (US GAO, 1995) reported that the nation's children faced an epidemic of indoor air pollution at school and other threats due to decayed, neglected infrastructure. US GAO estimated that some 14 million children attended the one-third of schools needing major repairs, including environmental problems that can threaten their health and learning. In New York State, the Education Department over the last four years has held dozens of hearings on the conditions of

schools. The state has also reported that the poorest children have the schools in the worst condition and that environmental problems have adversely impacted learning. According to the New York State Education Department, the state's 4,200 schools enroll 2.8 million children every year. Over one-third of the schools these children attend have polluted indoor air and/or building failures that lead to indoor contamination. Environmental hazards such as leaky roofs, poor ventilation, out-dated boilers, and faulty wiring are impairing children's rights to a free appropriate public education. We have a duty to act to make sure this no longer occurs.

THE LEGAL ACTION GUIDE: Children and School Environments

This Guide, written for students, parents, school employees, and other concerned members of the New York City education community, is intended to provide information about correcting environmental problems in New York's schools. While focused on New York City public schools, many laws also apply to other New York State public schools as well. The Guide can help you protect your child or yourself from environmental hazards found in too many schools. Not all buildings have the same problems. The Guide identifies typical hazards, explains why the hazards are important, and describes how or where to look for them. *In addition, the Guide points you towards the laws that your school might be violating by allowing problems to go uncorrected.* Most importantly, we have provided phone numbers of offices and organizations that can help you if you spot any of these problems in your school. We recommend that before calling any of the offices outside your school, first speak to your principal, or a member of your School Leadership Team.

If you are a school employee you should talk to your union representative. We also urge you to share your information with parents of any affected children. There is nothing that destroys parents' trust in schools more than finding out that school personnel and school officials who knew of possible hazards failed to act or concealed information.

Parents: always ask if someone in your school is aware of the problem, or is willing to work with you to solve the problem. Good people to talk to at school include the Head Custodian and the head of the Parents' Association as well as the principal and members of the school leadership team. If, after you have given the person you have

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spoken with a chance to take action, and you see that nothing is being done to remedy the situation, you should take action yourself by calling the numbers provided in this guide.

To get problems fixed almost always takes more than one phone call. Short letters work best because they leave a 'paper trail'; keep a copy for yourself. To help we have printed sample letters at the end of this guide - just change the details so the letter fits your situation. And don't forget to involve friends, parents, or other groups in the neighborhood to help you. You have a right to ask and to take some actions. No one should live, go to work, or learn in unsanitary or hazardous conditions.

We have placed asterisks (*) next to the organizations that we think can be most helpful. Additionally, at the back of the guide is a list of government officials you can call if you're not getting help or answers from the school or the organizations we've listed.

If you have no success at getting the problem corrected, please call *Advocates for Children of New York* at 212-947-9779 or the *Healthy Schools Network* at 518-462-0632 to get assistance.

Your Right to Clean Indoor AIR:

Why is INDOOR AIR QUALITY important?

It is extremely important for children to have learning places that are free from air pollution. Air-borne pollutants in schools include dirt, dust, lead, asbestos fibers, chemical fumes, carbon monoxide and other gases, pesticides, bacteria, mold, cockroach or pest leavings, tar and diesel fumes, and many other contaminants from machines and people in the building. These pollutants come from surfaces in the building, cleaning products, paints and floor finishes, carpets, other occupants of the building, buses, the outdoor air, and they can be a result of demolition or construction. They can cause a wide range of problems from asthma to flu-like symptoms such as headaches, sore throats, memory problems, joint pain, and nausea. Not everyone has the same reactions, but children and adults with pre-existing health problems including asthma, allergies, or chemical sensitivities generally have more problems. Many of us spend up to 90% of our time in homes, schools, stores, offices, and other workplaces, constantly exposing ourselves to dangerous airborne pollutants.

Asthma, in particular, is of enormous concern, as it is the leading cause of school absenteeism due to chronic disease. Nationally, it affects nearly 5 million children below the age of 18.[1] A recent study found that the hospitalization rates were 21 times higher in poor, minority areas than in well-off communities in New York City. Both indoor and outdoor pollutants contribute to asthma.[2]

How can you recognize AIR QUALITY problems?

As a parent, student or school employee, to diagnose air-quality problems in your school there are three main things you can do:

1. Think about your child. Does your child have more frequent or more severe asthma attacks on school days? What about other health or breathing problems? Are your child's schoolmates also coming home from school with health complaints?

2. Go to school and get permission to walk through the halls to your child's class (es). Are you experiencing any breathing problems or other health problems such as itchy eyes, headaches or nausea while you are there? Are there any musty, moldy, dusty, or strong chemical odors? Try to identify the source(s) of the smells.

3. Here are some things to look for:

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[1] www.epa.gov/epadocs/child/htm, 6/11/99

[2] "Far More Poor Children are Hospitalized for Asthma, Study Shows," The New York Times, July 27, 1999

Staining or deterioration of walls and other surfaces: This might mean mold or other microorganisms are growing there. Any carpeting or furnishings that have been wet for more than 24 hours need special vacuuming or cleaning. They may need removal.

Copy machines and print shops: Copy machines produce ozone, which has been linked to lung problems; print shops may use toxic inks and cleaning fluids. In order to avoid the harmful effects of ozone or toxic supplies, machine areas should be in a room with good ventilation (open windows and/or exhaust fans).

Art, science, and vocational classes: Paints, glues, and other art, science and vocational supplies contain chemicals that can be toxic to children and pollute the air. These class spaces need to reduce their use of toxic products and/or provide good ventilation, meaning lots of fresh air and exhaust fans.

Buses: Buses by law are not supposed to stay outside school for more than three minutes with their engines running. If it is more than 40 degrees Fahrenheit outside, buses cannot let their engines run at all. The fumes that are released by buses are poisonous in high enough concentrations and can cause breathing problems.

Construction: Demolition and construction can create hazardous dust, fumes, and noise. This can make breathing and learning very difficult or impossible for some children.

Asbestos: Dangers associated with asbestos are addressed in the Asbestos section.

Are there laws about AIR QUALITY?

Yes, though there should be more. State law protects acceptable air quality in schools. A law called the Public Employees Safety and Health Act (PESH) protects teachers, administrators, and other people working at public schools from working in an environment with certain toxins in the air. Consequently, children are indirectly protected by law from learning in a school with poor air quality. However, there aren't laws requiring schools to test indoor air quality, and tests are not always good indicators of healthful indoor air. There are no standards for indoor air established specifically for children.

There is a state regulation that specifically addresses the right to a well-ventilated room. 8 New York Code of Rules and Regulations (N.Y.C.R.R.) 155.1(b)(3)(ii) says that each teaching space should have a constant supply of fresh air to avoid the problem of odor, toxins and dust build-up; In addition, the New York City Health Code, section 45.11 says that each school room should be properly ventilated, but not so well-ventilated as to cause drafts. 8 NYCRR 155.3(d) covers rules for heating and ventilating and air conditioning for non-Big City schools in the state.

Regarding outside air pollution, Section 24-163 of the New York City Administrative Code specifically states that buses cannot leave their motors running for more than three minutes, and cannot leave them running at all when it is warmer than 40 degrees outside.

Low cost steps to improve school air quality

Have your school use nontoxic cleaning and other products; stop bus idling; have custodians damp mop instead of dry sweep halls and classes; make sure the school is protecting school occupants during renovations; increase fresh air supply by making sure windows are open; make sure your school repairs leaks and water damage quickly; keep garbage and litter picked up and bathrooms vented.

Who can you contact about AIR QUALITY problems at school?

New York City Board of Education (BOE), Office of Occupational Health and Safety: 718-935-2319 (They must be contacted by a principal, district office, or parents' association. If you are having an air quality problem at your school, ask someone to contact this office and they will investigate.)

* *BOE Office of Environmental Health and Safety*, 718-391-6475 (Contact the school custodian before contacting this office so that you can be sure that the problem is not one the custodian can handle. They will investigate and take air quality samples or should do an occupational health survey.)

NYC Department of Health, Asthma Action Line: 1-877-ASTHMA-0 (They don't generally deal with schools, but they're a good place to contact for general asthma problems.)

NY Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC): 718-482-4900 (for outdoor air quality problems)

NYC Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) air quality unit: 212-312-8950 (We tried calling and were unsuccessful at getting a person on the phone—you can try and maybe you'll have better luck then us)

* *BOE Office of School Facilities, Chief Executives Office, Pete Smith*: 718-391-6466
BOE Office of Transportation Services: 718-392-8855 (for idling buses causing air problems)

**New York State Department of Labor* (overseas public employee safety rules, including airborne chemical toxins; investigates complaints; can be contacted by a public school employee but not by a parent/guardian) write to: New York City District, 345 Hudson Street, Mail Stop 7F PO Box 683, New York, NY 10014 or call (212) 352-6132 or Fax (212) 352-6138

NYS DOH Environmental Health Infoline: 1-800-458-1158 x 2-7810

US EPA Indoor Air Quality Information Clearinghouse: 1-800-438-4318

American Lung Association: 1-800-LUNG-USA

Healthy Schools Network, Inc. 518-462-0632 or Advocates for Children at 212-947-9779 information about Guides, reports, factsheets, and technical assistance: *Parent Guide to School Air Quality; Allergies, Asthma, and Chemical Sensitivity packet; Student Health Checklist; Memo for Physicians on Requesting Accommodation; posters; What to do if your child has an environmental exposure at school (written by and for parents); Guide to Healthier Cleaning Practices and Products; ...and more.*

Your Right to an ASBESTOS-safe School:

Why is ASBESTOS bad?

For decades asbestos was used in construction to strengthen products, to provide heat insulation and to provide fire resistance. It is now known that asbestos fibers can have serious effects on the health of everyone who breathes them in. When breathed in, asbestos lodges itself in the lungs. People who are regularly exposed to asbestos may later develop asbestosis or lung cancer. Both of these illnesses can be fatal.

Asbestos-containing materials can be managed safely in a school that is in good repair and kept clean. Asbestos is often found around pipes in insulation, and in floor and ceiling tiles. Not all asbestos needs to be immediately removed, but it must be controlled.

How can you recognize ASBESTOS problems?

Every school, public and private, is required to test for and notify the public of loose asbestos. Remodeling or other types of construction can disturb asbestos fibers that are already in the building and cause them to be released into the air where they can be inhaled. Unfortunately, asbestos is not easily recognizable. It comes in different shapes, sizes, exterior coverings and colors. Only proper testing can determine if what you see is truly asbestos. Asbestos is often found as insulation around pipes and boilers. If you see insulation that is in poor condition (ripped, peeling, etc), or floor tiles being removed for construction, you should ask school officials to tell you what health protections are in place or what actions will be taken.

Are there laws about ASBESTOS?

Yes! There are federal, state and local laws that act to reduce the risk of asbestos exposure in schools. The Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA) is a federal law. The regulations are found in 40 Code of Federal Regulations (C.F.R.) Part 763. These regulations specifically discuss the management of asbestos containing materials in schools. Asbestos may not have to be removed but just managed in a safe manner. Every school must have an AHERA report. New York State regulations 12 N.Y.C.R.R. Part 56 and 10 N.Y.C.R.R. Part 73 address the removal of asbestos from public places and the appropriate training required for people working with asbestos generally.

Who can you contact about ASBESTOS problems in school?

BOE Office of Environmental Health and Safety: 718-391-6475 (Contact your custodian before contacting this office so that you can be sure that the problem is not one the custodian can handle. They can investigate and test for asbestos You can also ask to see your school's AHERA report.)

NYC DOH Bureau of Environmental Investigation: 212-442-3372 (will investigate)

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NYS DEC: 718-482-4900 (for disposal, not removal problems)

NYS DOH Environmental Health Infoline: 1-800-458-1158 x27940 (will provide information and will investigate)

Office of School Facilities, Chief Executives Office, Pete Smith: 718-391-6466

* *NY State Department of Labor* (overseas public employee safety rules, including asbestos; investigates complaints; should be contacted by a public school employee and not by a parent or guardian)

State Department of Labor
New York City District
345 Hudson Street
Mail Stop 7F PO Box 683
New York, NY 10014
Tel. (212) 352-6132
Fax (212) 352-6138

US Environmental Protection Agency (enforces AHERA nationally)

National Emission Standard for Hazardous Air Pollutants Program
US EPA
290 Broadway
New York, NY 10007
Tel: 212-637-4042

New York State Education Department (enforces AHERA for all schools in the state)

NYS Education Department
Office of Facilities Planning/AHERA
Education Building Annex, 10th floor
Albany, NY 12234
Tel: 518-474-3906

Your Right to a LEAD-safe School:

Why is LEAD harmful?

Lead is harmful because it is a poison that is readily absorbed by children either through the lungs when it is breathed, or through the gut when it is swallowed and is carried to all organs of the body, including the brain, which is the most sensitive organ in a young child. Even at low concentrations, lead can permanently decrease brain function.

There are two main ways lead gets into the school environment. Old lead-based paint can be under coats of newer, non-leaded paint, and drinking water can be contaminated by contact from old pipes. Lead paint becomes dangerous when it begins to flake off and turn to dust. Lead dust, like all dust, can enter our bodies when we breathe. Lead dust can also accumulate on toys that children might put into their mouths or can settle on something we touch, creating the risk of it clinging onto our fingers and being eaten when we handle food. When we drink contaminated water, the lead is absorbed by our bodies.

Elevated blood lead levels have been associated with several problems, including neurological disorders that are often permanent. These disorders include attention deficit disorder (ADD), attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), aggressive and impulsive behavior, and mental retardation. Younger children are especially vulnerable to the harmful effects of lead.

How can you recognize LEAD problems?

You can not see, smell, or taste lead. It is difficult, if not impossible, to identify lead problems just by looking. One thing you can look for is chipping, flaking, or peeling paint. Lead paint was banned in 1978, but some schools used paint supplies after that date. If your school was built before 1980, it will probably have lead paint underneath the current coat of paint. Even if your school has been painted since 1978, if the previous paint layers have not been properly removed, lead paint may be exposed through the chipping or peeling of the newer layers. This is one reason why school roof repair and building maintenance are so important to your child's health. Demolition can also create lead-contaminated dust.

If you see, or your child tells you about chipped or peeled paint, or dust from repairs that has not been controlled or carefully cleaned up, you should take action immediately by trying to get the paint or its dust tested for lead.

There is no easy way to determine if there is lead in your water, except by testing. Tests must be conducted on water samples to determine what the lead content of your water is. Some parent groups have taken school water samples to the local hospital lab for testing. If water tastes strange, that may indicate other problems that should be investigated.

Lead can still get into school supplies. Ask your school to make sure its art and other classroom supplies are 'lead-safe'. Be careful about donated products.

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Are there laws about LEAD?

Yes! There are federal laws about lead in school drinking water. 42 United States Code (U.S.C.) 300j-24 and 42 U.S.C. 300j-25 are set up specifically to help schools identify lead problems in their water. 42 U.S.C. 300f, The Safe Drinking Water Act, sets standards for acceptable levels of contaminants in water, including lead.

New York State Public Health Law Sec.1373 gives power to the Commissioner of Health to enforce the correction of paint conditions that could lead to lead poisoning.

The New York City Health Code Sec. 45.12 makes it illegal for lead paint to be present in kindergarten settings.

Federal laws don't require schools specifically to test for lead in paint, soil, or dust.

Who can you contact about LEAD problems in school?

BOE Office of Environmental Health and Safety: 718-391-6475 (Contact your custodian before contacting this office so that you are sure that the problem is not one the custodian can handle. They will investigate and test for lead in drinking water.)

NYC DOH Lead Poisoning Prevention Program: 212-BAN-LEAD (226-5323) (We have found they generally do not deal with school-based problems, but are a good resource if you have a general question about lead.)

* *NYC DOH Bureau of Environmental Investigation*: 212-442-3372 (will investigate situation)

NYC BOE of School Facilities, Chief Executives Office, Pete Smith: 718-391-6466
US Environmental Protection Agency (enforces lead abatement regulations):

Toxic Substances Program
Environmental Protection Agency
Mail Code MS 500. Building 5
2890 Woodbridge Avenue
Edison, NJ 08837
732-321-6671

Drinking Water Hotline (can help locate a lab to test water), 1-800-426-4791

National Lead Information Center 800-424-LEAD

Healthy Schools Network, Inc. (518-462-0632) or Advocates for Children for Children (212- 947-9779) for information about the State Education Department guidelines on lead-safe school products.

Your Right to an APPROPRIATE and UNCROWDED CLASSROOM:

Why are APPROPRIATE and UNCROWDED CLASSROOMS important in terms of health and safety?

Overcrowded classrooms, or classes conducted in non-appropriate rooms, such as auditoriums, closets, bathrooms, hallways and basements can affect how well children learn. Substandard environmental conditions can make it difficult to learn.

It can also be dangerous for children to learn in these settings. Overcrowding promotes unsanitary, unsafe conditions, and can contribute to polluted indoor air. It is easy for illnesses to spread in tight, enclosed rooms—especially if the room is not well ventilated. And too many people crowded together make ventilation difficult.

Children often don't have access to proper equipment in non-traditional and overcrowded classrooms. Working at improperly sized desks and chairs can cause injury to the back and to the neck. Children, like adults should work at proper workstations to minimize the risk of occupational injuries.

It is also important for classrooms to have adequate lighting. Poor lighting leads to eyestrain that can result in a permanent injury requiring a child to use corrective lenses.

How can you tell if your child has an APPROPRIATE and UNCROWDED CLASSROOM?

This is easy. Ask your child or go look. Is your child taught in a traditional classroom? How many children are in your child's class? How big is the room? Are there chairs and desks for every child? Are children forced to share desks? Are the desks squeezed into a room too small? Is the room in the basement? Does the room have good ventilation—specifically, does the room have windows that open and close? Are the windows painted or nailed shut? If there are no windows, does air still circulate in from somewhere else or is the room completely stuffy?

Are there laws about APPROPRIATE and UNCROWDED CLASSROOMS?

Yes! Two state regulations address the issue of traditional and uncrowded classrooms. State regulation 8 N.Y.C.R.R. 155.1(b)(2)(iii) says that teaching areas must have a window arrangement that provides a view of the outside. State regulation 8 N.Y.C.R.R. 155.1(b)(2)(iv) says that teaching areas must be properly proportioned.

A number of city laws address classroom conditions. NYC Health Code Section 49.07 guarantees that there be 15 square feet of floor space per child. NYC Health Code Section 45.11 sets standards for the amount of lighting that is needed in each classroom. Section 45.11 also provides that classes cannot be conducted in the cellars of schools, and that schools cannot be located in factories or other business buildings. Sections 49.09 and 45.13 of the Health Code stress the need for appropriately sized equipment for children.

Who can you contact if your child does not have an APPROPRIATE and UNCROWDED CLASSROOM?

For this problem, your best bet, after speaking with people in the school is to speak to the district superintendent or someone else at the district office. You can also try:

Office of School Facilities, Chief Executives Office, Pete Smith: 718-391-6466

NYC Dept of Health Complaints Hotline: 212-442-9666

Your Right to a School that is SAFELY HEATED and VENTILATED:

Why is it important for the school to be SAFELY HEATED AND VENTILATED?

Schools need to be heated during the winter for the obvious reason of keeping children and school employees warm and supplied with fresh air. However, heat brings with it some safety risks. It is necessary for schools to be well ventilated, even when they are being heated; otherwise toxins—the kinds of air pollutants that were mentioned earlier—build up in the air. Schools are particularly at risk of being poorly ventilated during winter months when windows are kept closed to keep the heat in. School classrooms that are always too hot or too cold can also affect learning.

Another heat-health risk is from boilers. All boilers need to be inspected regularly. If boilers are not properly maintained, they can explode and cause serious injury to anyone who happens to be in the area. Some schools still use coal boilers which if they malfunction can release carbon monoxide or other dangerous gasses.

How can you tell if your school is not SAFELY HEATED and VENTILATED?

The easiest way to tell in terms of whether or not your school is safely heated is to simply check the temperature inside of the school or to ask your child. If you are a school employee, the answer will be obvious. If your child tells you she or he is cold or is packing an additional shirt or wearing a short sleeve shirt in the middle of winter, that may be an indication that the school is not properly heated. Is the temperature appropriate considering the outside temperature? Are the rooms too drafty or not ventilated enough?

Find out when the boilers were last inspected. Unfortunately, that is not something that you can just ask your child about. You will need to speak with the custodian or someone else who is knowledgeable. Find out who inspected the boilers. Get their name title and date that s/he inspected. Was the inspector properly licensed? If the building is being heated by something other than a boiler, check to see that there are adequate protective guards on the equipment.

Are there laws about schools being SAFELY HEATED and VENTILATED?

Yes! New York City Health Code Section 131.03 states that a person hired to heat a building must heat all occupied parts of the building to at least the minimum prescribed temperature. Section 45.11 of the Health Code says that a temperature between 68 and 72 degrees must be maintained in a building occupied by children whenever the outside temperature drops below 55 degrees.

New York State Labor Law Section 204 addresses boiler inspection and New York State Labor Law Section 216 addresses the penalty for failure to inspect boilers.

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Who can you contact if your school is not SAFELY HEATED and VENTILATED?

* *BOE Office of Environmental Health and Safety*: 718-391-6475 (Contact your custodian before contacting this office so that you can be sure that the problem is not one the custodian can handle. They will investigate and take air quality samples)

NYS DEC: 718-482-4900 (if burning oil or chemicals are causing problems)

* *Office of School Facilities, Chief Executives Office, Pete Smith*: 718-391-6466

* *NY State Department of Labor* (overseas public employee safety rules, including airborne chemical toxins; investigates complaints; should be contacted by a public school employee and not by a parent or guardian)

New York City District
345 Hudson Street
Mail Stop 7F PO Box 683
New York, NY 10014
Tel. (212) 352-6132
Fax (212) 352-6138

Your Right to a School that is Free From FIRE HAZARDS

What types of FIRE HAZARDS are there?

Schools need to be up to par with the state and New York City Building Code. Schools cannot be opened unless they have a Certificate of Occupancy (CO) from the NYC Department of Buildings and the Fire Department. If schools do not meet Building Code requirements, the risk of a fire increases, as does the risk of serious injury resulting from a fire.

All schools must have interior fire alarms that are tested regularly and are connected to the fire department. If schools are not equipped with working alarms, it takes people longer to become aware of an actual fire and the danger is increased. If the alarms are not connected to the fire department, the department will be unable to respond instantaneously. Without connected alarms, they will not know to come unless someone contacts them. The longer the delay between when a fire starts and when people become aware of it, the greater the risk of a serious injury resulting.

Schools must also hold regular fire drills. Without fire drills, no one would know what to do if a fire were to break out, and, again, the risk of a serious injury would be increased in the event of an actual fire.

In rooms such as chemistry labs and custodial areas, flammable items must be stored in a safe manner so as to limit the possibility of an explosion. When flammable items are stored in a poorly ventilated room and in proximity to other items that they may react with, the risk of a fire breaking out is much greater than normal. Paint can be a flammable material. Paints should be nonflammable or stored in well-ventilated rooms that have fire extinguishers. Even when flammable materials are stored as safely as possible, there is still a risk that a fire will break out, so it is important that fire extinguishers be available so that the fire can be contained and put out before it has a chance to spread. Eliminating as many flammable and combustible items from school supplies is an environmentally healthy practice.

Are there laws about FIRE HAZARDS in schools?

Yes! New York State Education Law 807 mandates fire drills in schools. The Rules of the City of New York provide for the installation of fire alarms in all schools, and also identify flammable materials and the manner in which they should be stored (2 RCNY 8.01, 3 RCNY 34.01, 3 RCNY 22.01 and 3 RCNY 28-02.)

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Who can you contact about FIRE HAZARDS?

* *Office of School Facilities, Chief Executives Office, Pete Smith*: 718-391-6466

New York City Fire Department Inspection Unit (empowered to conduct safety inspections of buildings to determine whether any conditions are present which violate the City Fire Code or create a fire safety hazard; can order correction of any such violation)

New York City Fire Department Inspection Unit
250 Livingston Street
Brooklyn, NY 11201

NYC Department of Buildings (can inspect construction work, machinery and equipment; can order a dangerous condition that is "detrimental to life or health" to be fixed, or can cause the building to be vacated. Detrimental conditions include "the overcrowding of persons therein, defects in the construction, or deficiencies in fire alarm, or fire extinguishing equipment or fire escape equipment." NYC Admin Code 26-127, 26-216, 26-217, 26-219) write at:

City Department of Buildings
60 Hudson Street
New York, NY 10013
Tel: 212-312-8000
Complaint Lines:

Bronx	718-579-6906
Brooklyn	718-802-3681
Manhattan	212-312-8529
Queens	718-520-3402
Staten Island	718-816-2211

Your Right to CRACK-FREE Walls, Ceilings and Floors:

Why are CRACKS in walls, floors, and ceilings dangerous?

Cracks and other weaknesses in buildings are far too common in schools today. The inherent danger in having cracks in walls is obvious: buildings should be solid, and building occupants should not have to worry about the ceiling falling down on them. A more subtle issue is the dust that results from broken walls. Dust and other small particles can make asthma and other breathing problems worse. Further, cracks in buildings provide openings through which pests can enter and find shelter to breed. The specific problems associated with pests will be discussed later in the guide.

Where should you look for CRACKS?

It is important to look for cracks not only on classroom walls, but on the ceiling and floor as well. Look inside the school building as well as at the exterior of the building. Cracks emerging from the building foundation and climbing up the outside walls are cause for major concerns.

Are there laws about CRACKS in school buildings?

Yes! New York State Education Law 409-d directs the Commissioner of Education to establish a school building safety program to determine the needs for repairs and reconstruction to maintain the structural integrity of school buildings. The Rules of the state of New York require the Board of Education to conduct a visual inspection of the walls, doors, and roofs of all school buildings for evidence of movement, deterioration and structural failure. If the visual inspection discloses evidence of possible defects, the school board must retain a licensed architect or professional engineer, who shall make a written report and submit it to the Commissioner with a claim for building aid. (8 N.Y.C.R.R. 155.1(d)). Additionally, the Rules of New York City require periodic inspections of public buildings to detect fracturing and splitting in exterior walls, cracking of masonry and brick work in brick-faced buildings, or water entry into the walls. (Building Code, RCNY 32.03(b)(2)(v)).

Who can you contact about CRACKS?

* *BOE Office of Environmental Health and Safety*: 718-391-6475 (Contact your custodian before contacting this office so that you can be sure that the problem is not one the custodian can handle. They will investigate and take air quality samples if you are concerned about dust.)

School Construction Authority, Facilities Inspection Division: 718-472-8319 (if the school is currently under construction or renovation) or the *School Construction Authority General Complaints number*: 718-472-8052 (for construc./renov. issues)

Office of School Facilities, Chief Executives Office, Pete Smith: 718-391-6466

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Your Right to a Safe PLAYGROUND:

Is there a right for children to have a PLAYGROUND at school?

Children in school should have access to a playground; this is a right protected by New York City Health Code, which states that children cannot be kept in school for more than five hours without being given a recreation period during which the outdoor play space should be used whenever the weather permits. Another law states that no school may be constructed in New York City without being attached to an open-air playground.

Why is PLAYGROUND safety important?

Each year, in this country alone, over 200,000 children are injured in playgrounds[3]. It is important to monitor playgrounds so that the number of injuries can be decreased. If playgrounds are not surveyed for various hazards, the number and severity of playground related injuries can increase.

How can you recognize a dangerous PLAYGROUND?

There are four main things to consider when measuring how safe a playground is.

- First, it is important that the playground equipment is age appropriate. Consider the size and difficulty of certain playground equipment. Young children have different physical abilities than older children and should not be playing on equipment that is meant for older children (such as horizontal ladders).
- Second, look at the surfacing in the playground. The surface should break falls. Loose-fill or synthetic material such as wood chips or rubber matting is preferred. Cement is not acceptable because it does not have any give when a person falls on it. Dirt can be a problem because it can freeze in the winter.
- Third, playgrounds should always be supervised. Children should not be permitted to play on the equipment without an adult there to monitor their activities. You should ask at the school to make sure that a school employee is with the children at all times when they go out to the playground. If you are a school employee this should be easy to monitor.
- Last, take a visual survey of the playground and look at how well maintained it is. Look to see if there is any broken equipment, how close the playground is to traffic, and if there is any trash on the premises.

Are there laws pertaining to PLAYGROUNDS and PLAYGROUND SAFETY?

Yes! New York State Education Law Section 2556(5) mandates that no school can be constructed in New York City without being attached to an open-air playground. State Regulation 8 N.Y.C.R.R 155.1 (c)(1) sets the minimum of three acres for an elementary school's outside recreation area and ten acres for a high school's. 24 RCNY 45.11 and

[3] The National Program for Playground Safety, "National Action Plan for the Prevention of Playground Injuries," September 1996

45.13 outline the need for outdoor play areas and the type of equipment to which children should have access. New York City Health Code Section 49.13 says that children cannot be kept at school for more than five hours without being given a recreation period during which the outdoor play space should be used whenever the weather permits. New York City Health Code Section 45.11 says that that outdoor play area should be, "safe, clean, easily accessible adequate in size and suitable for the needs of the children." It also says that a shady area should be available during the summer months. Section 45.13 of the Health Code says that sufficient play equipment should be provided and that the provided equipment should be appropriate to the stage of development of the children. It also says that the equipment should be clean, readily washable, in good repair, and free from hazards.

Who can you contact if your PLAYGROUND is not safe?

Office of School Facilities, Chief Executives Office, Pete Smith: 718-391-6466
Some playgrounds are maintained jointly between the Board of Education and the New York City Parks Department. If your playground is one of these, than you should contact the Parks Department in addition to contacting the Office of School Facilities.

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Your Right to USABLE and SANITARY BATHROOMS:

What should a USABLE BATHROOM look like?

Usable bathrooms are important for all of the obvious sanitary and health reasons. When a bathroom has broken toilets or urinals it is unusable. If the sink faucets don't work or there is no soap, that is unsanitary. Stalls lacking doors, overflowing toilets, and the absence of toilet paper all are indicators of an unusable or unsanitary bathroom. There should be an adequate number of bathrooms in the school given the number of children that attend. Separate boys' and girls' bathrooms should exist as well. Usable and sanitary bathrooms should be ample in number, well stocked with toilet paper and other necessities, clean, and well maintained. In addition there should be bathrooms that are barrier free so that children with handicapping conditions are accommodated.

In order to find out if your child's school has usable and sanitary bathrooms, either ask your child what the bathroom is like or go to the school and check for yourself. If you're a school employee, you should know from personal experience or by looking around the student's bathrooms whether or not the school's bathrooms are usable and sanitary.

Are there laws about USABLE and SANITARY Bathrooms?

Yes! There is State Education law on toilets and restroom facilities for children. State regulation 8 N.Y.C.R.R. 155.1(b)(4)(ii) says that bathrooms should have an adequate number of toilets.

There are several sections of the New York City Health Code that set standards for bathrooms in schools. Section 49.07 says that all schools should have at least two wash basins (sinks), and that schools with more than 300 children should have at least six wash basins, and an additional basin for every 100 additional children. Section 45.11 says that there should be separate bathrooms for boys and girls over six years of age and that toilets in these bathrooms must be separated by a partition that is at least five feet six inches high. Section 45.11 also says that wash basins should have both hot and cold water. For new schools, section 45.11 provides that there should be separate bathrooms for school employees. Section 45.13 states that all bathrooms should be supplied with soap and either paper towels or hand dryers. According to 45.13, these items should be near the sinks.

Who can you contact if you do not have a USABLE or SANITARY Bathroom?

Office of School Facilities, Chief Executives Office, Pete Smith: 718-391-6466

Department of Health General Complaints Hotline: 212-442-9666

Your Right to a PEST-free School:

Why are PESTS bad?

The most obvious reason why schools should be pest free, is that rodents, insects and other pests can carry diseases that can be transmitted to humans. However rodents, insects and other pests can be harmful in other ways as well. They can cause or worsen allergies, in addition to causing or making worse an asthma condition.

How can you recognize PEST problems?

Pest problems are most easily detected visually. Ask your child if he or she has ever seen a pest in school, or if you are a school employee, look around for yourself and also ask the children and other employees. If rodent(s) or insect(s) or their droppings have been sighted inside of school, the school has a pest problem.

If pests are seen near or on school grounds, an inspection should be made to make sure that the school is not infested and caution should be taken to prevent infestation in the future.

Are there laws about PESTS in schools?

Yes! Section 151.03 of the New York City Health Code says that all buildings must be kept free from conditions that might lead to infestations and that if a building is infested, immediate action by the person in control should be taken to get rid of the pest infestation. Also see next page on pesticide-free schools.

Who can you contact about PEST problems in school?

**State Department of Labor* (overseas public employee safety rules, including airborne chemical toxins which can include pesticides; investigates complaints; should be contacted by a public school employee and not by a parent or guardian). Write to, New York City District, 345 Hudson Street, Mail Stop 7F PO Box 683, New York, NY 10014, or call, Tel. (212) 352-6132 or Fax (212) 352-6138

*NYC BOE *Division of School, Food and Nutrition Services*: 718-729-6100 (will investigate problems related to the cafeteria)

NYC DOH: 212-442-1999 (We tried calling this number, but were unable to reach anybody)

NYS DOH Environmental Health Infoline: 1-800-458-1158 x27820 (will provide information and will investigate)

Your Right to a PESTICIDE-free School:

Why can PESTICIDES be bad?

Pesticides are often used for ridding buildings and areas of rodents, insects, and other pests. But they only work temporarily and need to be re-applied. However, the poisons found in pesticides may harm more than the pests. Pesticides can be absorbed through the skin, inhaled, or swallowed by humans. Children already have proportionately more pesticide exposures than adults and pesticides have been linked to certain cancers, damage to the central nervous system, neurological and behavior problems, as well as acute poisoning. No pesticides have been tested specifically for safety around children or in combination with other chemicals.

Pesticides can temporarily control or eliminate pests that are obviously dangerous to your child, but clearly they bring their own dangers. There are easy, inexpensive ways of ridding schools of pests that are both less dangerous and more permanent than pesticides, such as caulking and screening, cleaning up spills and food waste, or confining food to only certain areas. These methods are called non-toxic pest management. If pesticides are still required, then a state-certified pesticide applicator should use only the least-toxic product that will work. If pesticides must be used, they should be used in a way that would minimize the harmful effects. Important ways schools can use to protect children and others from pesticides are to tell people in advance of pesticide use, post signs in treated areas, keep children away from areas where pesticides have been applied, and have only a certified applicator who is at least 21 years old apply pesticides at school.

How can you recognize PESTICIDE problems?

Pesticides are typically not visible after they have been applied. Whether your school has a pest problem or not, you (if you're a school employee) or your child may still be at risk of pesticide exposure because pesticides can be used preventatively as well. The best way to find out if pesticides are used is to ask someone—start with the principal, custodian or a member of the School Leadership Team (or the union rep if you're a school employee). Some people react physically to pesticides with flu like symptoms, headaches, rashes, nausea and tiredness. Remember to ask about pesticide use not just in the school, but outside as well—such as in the playground or on any grassy areas nearby. If you find out that pesticides were used, think about where they were laid down and when. Was school in session at the time? Is it an area that kids often go to? Was there a good alternative to the use of the pesticide?

Are there laws about PESTICIDE use in schools?

Not specifically. The only law that even peripherally addresses pesticide use is the PESH air quality law discussed earlier. PESH can apply to pesticides as well, in that pesticides can be air-borne and can thus affect the air quality of schools.

Approximately 30 other states have some school-pesticide regulations, including at least four that require schools to reduce pesticide use. The New York State Education Department has recommended that all schools reduce their use of toxic pesticides, as has the NYS Attorney General.

Schools must follow applicable federal and state laws since schools are considered 'commerical' application sites for pesticides. For example, schools must have a certified applicator 'on site' during an application of pesticides, but not necessarily performing the application; schools must keep copies of the labels of pesticide products used, and places of application must be posted. All schools must be in compliance with the OSHA Hazard Communication Act and New York State Right to Know laws on hazardous substances.

Who can you contact about PESTICIDE problems in school?

**State Department of Labor* (overseas public employee safety rules, including airborne chemical toxins which can include pesticides; investigates complaints; should be contacted by a public school employee and not by a parent or guardian)

New York City District
345 Hudson Street
Mail Stop 7F PO Box 683
New York, NY 10014
Tel. (212) 352-6132
Fax (212) 352-6138

*NYC BOE *Division of School, Food and Nutrition Services*: 718-729-6100 (will investigate problems related to the cafeteria; also operates a voluntary nontoxic pest management program for City schools)

NYC DOH: 212-442-1999 (We tried calling this number, but were unable to reach anyone)

NYS DOH Environmental Health Infoline: 1-800-458-1158 x27820 (will provide information and will investigate)

Healthy Schools Network, Inc. 518-462-0632 (literature and guides including Children, Learning and Poisons Don't Mix: Kick the Pesticide Habit, Factsheet on Right to Know, packet on Integrated Pest Management in Schools, What to do if your child has an environmental exposure at school, and more.)

Your Right to Information about the SCHOOL BUILDING:

You have a right to information about your school buildings and grounds. Records and reports about the conditions of the buildings, copies of Certificates of Occupancy, Fire Safety Inspections, Emergency Management Plans, AHERA reports, and many other documents are public documents.

In addition, under chapters 56 and 58 of the laws of 1998 amending part 155 of the New York State Education law, the NYS Commissioner of Education will require all districts to have five year building condition surveys, annual visual inspections, monitoring systems for facility conditions, health and safety committees on which parents may serve, and Facility Report Cards. The Facility Report Cards will cover many topics, including age of the building, square footage, enrollment and capacity, heating plant, activities of the Health and Safety Committee, written preventive maintenance plan, whether the building has an air quality management plan, or an Integrated Pest Management plan to reduce pesticide use. These regulations take effect October 1999. Schools must comply by January 2001 or sooner.

Appendix A:
Sample Complaint Letters

SAMPLE COMPLAINT LETTERS

The following are samples of what letters to one of the contact agencies could look like. Feel free to copy it word for word, filling in the blanks so that it applies to your specific situation, to use it as guide for your own letter, or simply to use it as a way of knowing what to say when you call someone. It is important to include information such as when, where, and what you saw, whatever it was that made you concerned. The more information you provide, the easier it will be to fix the problem. However, just because you don't know or don't remember every detail, doesn't mean that you shouldn't report it or that it won't be fixed.

** ** **

Your Name
Your Address
Your City, State, Zip
Your Phone Number

Person You're Contacting
Address of Person
Person's City, State, Zip

Today's Date

Dear Person/Organization/Agency that will help me with my problem:

My child is a student at _____ in district _____. My child has _____ *(fill in the health problem that your child has, for example: asthma, sore throats, nausea, etc.)* and I'm concerned that there is a condition in the school that brought on the problem or is causing the problem to get worse. My child told me she/he noticed _____ _____ at school. *(Explain what you saw that you think could affect your child's health, for example: toxic fumes, dust, mold, etc.)* and that made me concerned about _____ _____ *(feel free to fill in with one of the categories from the guide, for example: the school's air quality, the possibility of a pest infestation, etc.)*. I believe that this problem is in violation of _____ *(If a law was mentioned in the guide that addresses what you saw, list it here, for example: New York City Health Code 45.11, the State Education Law Section 409, etc.)*. What can be done to remedy this situation? I am not happy that my child is being subjected to this condition. Please call me _____ *(write your number here)* between the hours of _____ *(write the hours that you are available)* or write me at the above address and tell me how and when this problem is going to be resolved.

Thank you for your time and help.

Sincerely,

Your Name

Your Name
Your Address
Your City, State, Zip
Your Phone Number

Person You're Contacting
Address of Person
Person's City, State, Zip

Today's Date

Dear Person/Organization/Agency that will help me with my problem:

I am a school employee at _____ in district _____. Since _____ (insert date that problem began or you first began to notice problem) I have been experiencing _____ _____ (fill in health problem: for example: asthma, sore throats, nausea, runny nose). I'm concerned that there is a condition in school that brought on this problem or is causing the problem to get worse. Specifically, I've noticed _____ _____ around school. (*Explain what you saw that you think could have affected your health, for example: toxic fumes, dust, mold, etc.*) and that made me concerned about _____ _____ (*feel free to fill in with one of the categories from the guide, for example: the school's air quality, the possibility of a pest infestation, etc.*). I believe that this problem is in violation of _____ (*If a law was mentioned in the guide that addresses what you saw, list it here, for example: New York City Health Code 45.11, the State Education Law Section 409, etc.*). What can be done to remedy this situation? I am not happy that I am being subjected to this condition. Please call me _____ (*write your number here*) between the hours of _____ (*write the hours that you are available*) or write me at the above address and tell me how and when this problem is going to be resolved.

Thank you for your time and help.

Sincerely,

Your Name

Your Name
Your Address
Your City, State, Zip
Your Phone Number

Person You're Contacting
Address of Person
Person's City, State, Zip

Today's Date

Dear Person/Organization/Agency that will help me with my problem:

I am a school employee at _____ in district _____. While walking into a classroom on _____ (*write date of incident*) I became concerned that both my and some of the students' health might be at risk in school because I noticed _____

_____

(*Explain what you saw that you think could affect your or the health of a student, for example: mold, pests, peeling paint, something that might be asbestos, a lack of fire extinguishers, etc.*). I understand that this violates _____ (*If a law was mentioned in the guide that addresses what you saw, list it here, for example: New York City Health Code 45.11, the State Education Law Section 409, etc.*). What can be done to remedy this situation? I am not happy that both me and my students are being exposed to this condition. Please call me _____ (*write your number here*) between the hours of _____ (*write the hours that you are available*) or write me at the above address and tell me how and when this problem is going to be resolved.

Thank you for your time and help.

Sincerely,

Your Name

Appendix B:
Further Affirmative Steps

Affirmative steps you can take to make your school safer and healthier:

Contact the **Environmental Protection Agency**: call either Matt Heister at 212-637-4003 or Jean Feola at 212-637-4025 to find out how to bring the Indoor Air Quality **Tools for Schools** program to your school.

Contact the **Department of Health**: Call 212-676-2491 to find out about the Department's **Open Airways for Schools** program that teaches third graders about asthma and how to bring the program to your school.

Contact the **Healthy Schools Network, Inc.** at 518-462-0632 to find out more about creating a healthier school for you and or your child. Publications include guides on air quality, lead, pesticides, nontoxic custodial products, health & safety committees, and many other topics.

Contact **Advocates for Children of New York, Inc.** at 212-947-9779 if you are having any school based problems in New York City. Our receptionist will inform you of our intake and hotline hours or send you to our information specialist if you are interested in written materials or workshops or trainings. AFC coordinates the NYC Healthy Schools Working Group on behalf of the Healthy Schools Network, Inc.

Take **Personal Action**: Get involved! If you're a parent or a student join your school's Leadership Team or for parents, join the Parents' Association. If you're a school employee, you can join the School Leadership Team or go to your school's union representative (better yet, become the representative!). Remember, action is the only way to bring about positive change.

Appendix C:
Congressional Contact Information

Politicians to Contact

You can contact your legislators about environmental and health problems in your school. Below are your federal legislators, though you can contact state and city officials as well.

Senator Daniel P. Moynihan

Washington office
464 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C., 20510
202-224-4451
senator@dpm.senate.gov

District office
405 Lexington Avenue, #4101,
New York, NY, 10174
212-661-5150

Senator Charles Schumer

Washington office
229 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C., 20510
202-224-6542
Web site
http://www.senate.gov/~schumer/

District office
26 Federal Plaza, Suite 31-100
New York, NY, 10278
212-486-4430

Rep. Michael Forbes
First Congressional District
Washington office
416 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C., 20515
202-225-3826

District office
1500 William Floyd Pkwy., #303,
Shirley, NY, 11967
516-345-9000

Rep. Rick A. Lazio
Second Congressional District
Washington office
2444 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C., 20515
202-225-3335
lazio@hr.house.gov

District office
126 W. Main Street,
Babylon, NY, 11702
516-893-9010

Rep. Peter T. King
Third Congressional District
Washington office
403 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C., 20515

District office
1003 Park Blvd.,
Massapequa Park, NY, 11762

202-225-7896
peter.king@mail.house.gov

516-541-4225

Rep. Carolyn McCarthy
Fourth Congressional District
Washington office
1725 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C., 20515
202-225-5516 5

District office
1 Fulton Avenue,
Hampstead, NY, 11550
516-489-7066

Rep. Gary L. Ackerman
Fifth Congressional District
Washington office
2243 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C., 20515
202-225-2601

District office
218-14 Northern Blvd.,
Bayside, NY, 11361
718-423-2154

Rep. Gregory Meeks
Sixth Congressional District
Washington office
1035 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C., 20515
202-225-3461

District office
196-06 Linden Blvd.,
St. Albans, NY, 11412
718-849-5600

Rep. Joseph Crowley
Seventh Congressional District
Washington office
1517 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C., 20515
202-225-3965
http://www.house.gov/writerep/

District office
82-11 37th Avenue, Suite 607
Jackson Heights, NY, 11372
718-779-1400

Rep. Jerrold Nadler
Eighth Congressional District
Washington office
2448 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C., 20515
202-225-5635
nita.lowey@mail.house

District office
1841 Broadway, No. 800,
New York, NY, 10023
212-489-3530

Rep. Anthony Weiner
Ninth Congressional District

Washington office
501 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C., 20515
202-225-6616
http://www.house.gov/writerep/

District office
1901 Emmons Avenue,
Brooklyn, NY, 11235
718-332-9001

Rep. Edolphus Towns
Tenth Congressional District
Washington office
2232 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C., 20515
202-225-5936
khalil.munir@mail.house.gov

District office
545 Broadway, No. 200,
Brooklyn, NY, 11206
718-387-8696

Rep. Major R. Owens
Eleventh Congressional District
Washington office
2305 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C., 20515
202-225-6231
jacqueline.ellis@mail.house.gov

District office
289 Utica Avenue,
Brooklyn, NY, 11213
718-773-3100

Rep. Nydia M. Velazquez
12th Congressional District
Washington office
1221 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C., 20515
202-225-2361
luis.rosero@mail.house.gov

District office
815 Broadway,
New York City, NY, 11206
718-599-3658

Rep. Vito J. Fossella
13th Congressional District
Washington office
2411 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C., 20515
202-225-3371

District office
14 New Dorp Lane,
Staten Island, NY, 10306
718-987-8400

Rep. Carolyn B. Maloney
14th Congressional District
Washington office
1330 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C., 20515
202-225-7944
rep.carolyn.maloney@mail.house.gov

District office
110 E. 59th St., 2nd floor,
New York, NY, 10022
212-832-6531

Rep. Charles B. Rangel
15th Congressional District

Washington office
2354 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C., 20515
202-225-4365
rangel@hr.house.gov

District office
163 W. 125th St.,
New York, NY, 10027
212-663-3900

Rep. Jose E. Serrano
16th Congressional District

Washington office
2342 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C., 20515
202-225-4361
jserrano@hr.house.gov

District office
890 Grand Concourse,
Bronx, NY, 10451
718-538-5400

Rep. Eliot L. Engel
17th Congressional District

Washington office
2303 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C., 20515
202-225-2464

engeline@hr.house.gov

District office
3655 Johnson Avenue,
Bronx, NY, 10463
718-796-9700

Rep. Nita M. Lowey
18th Congressional District

Washington office
2421 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C., 20515
202-225-6506
nita.lowey@mail.house.gov

District office
222 Mamaroneck Avenue,
White Plains, NY, 10605
914-428-1707

Rep. Sue Kelly
19th Congressional District

Washington office
1222 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C., 20515
202-225-5441
dearsue@hr.house.gov

District office
21 Old Main St., No. 205,
Fishkill, NY, 12524
914-897-5200

Rep. Benjamin A. Gilman
20th Congressional District
Washington office
2449 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C., 20515
202-225-3776
ben@mail.house.gov

District office
407 E. Main St.,
Middletown, NY, 10940
914-343-6666

Rep. Michael R. McNulty
21st Congressional District
Washington office
2161 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C., 20515
202-225-5076
mike.mcnulty@mail.house.gov

District office
U.S. Post Office, Jay St.,
Schenectady, NY, 12305
518-374-4547

Rep. John Sweeney
22nd Congressional District
Washington office
437 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C., 20515
202-225-5614
http://www.house.gov/writerep/

District office
285 Broadway,
Saratoga Springs, NY, 12866
518-587-9800

Rep. Sherwood L. Boehlert
23rd Congressional District
Washington office
2246 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C., 20515
202-225-3665
rep.boehlert@mail.house.gov

District office
10 Broad Street, Room 200,
Utica, NY, 13501-1270
315-793-8146

Rep. John M. McHugh
24th Congressional District
Washington office
2441 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C., 20515
202-225-4611
http://www.house.gov/writerep/

District office
404 Key Bank Building,
200 Washington Street
Watertown, NY, 13601
315-782-3150